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AFGHANISTAN

SUCCESS STORY

Winning Hearts and Minds with Water and Roads



USAID/LGCD

Children in Nawa fill their containers with fresh running water.



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A village elder and Nawa residents celebrate the construction of 46 running water taps.



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Nawa's water tank sits above the village.

U.S. Agency for International Development
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In eastern Afghanistan, near the border with Pakistan, infrastructure is poor and many villages lack good roads, access to clean water, and other basic necessities. USAID and U.S. Forces are working together to ensure that Afghan citizens receive the development assistance that they need to improve their livelihoods and quality of life. In insecure areas, this type of assistance shows local residents that the U.S. Government can improve their lives – winning hearts and minds.

In Nawa village in Sirkani District of Kunar Province, this means conducting both large infrastructure projects – like building roads that will decrease travel times and allow farmers to bring their crops to market – as well as small infrastructure projects like a gravity-powered water tank and faucet system. Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Kunar is building a road passing by Nawa to the border with Pakistan, and USAID is following the road with development projects, such as installing running water taps.

Nawa village is large and terraced farmland separates the homes. To provide running water for the entire population – approximately 200 households – USAID installed 46 water taps throughout the village using over 15 km of pipe. The water flows from a new 40 cubic meter (10,566 gallon) tank that sits over a natural spring. Gravity carries the water to the taps in the village.

In just six months, Nawa residents went from collecting and carrying water every day to using clean, well-built communal taps near their homes. This improves safety in the village, as women no longer have to haul water directly from the spring or canal. Additionally, local children will have access to clean running water, which improves overall health and sanitation.

Although Nawa village is in an insecure area, villagers held a ceremony celebrating the water taps. Children gleefully filled their water containers and village elders were grateful to the U.S. Government for providing easy access to such a vital resource. Coordinated development efforts truly make a difference in the lives of Afghans and are contributing to improved peace and security in the country.